

# St Gabriel's Church of England Primary School

Wilworth Crescent, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 8QN

## Inspection dates

26–27 March 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Children get off to an excellent start with their learning in the Reception class and continue to make outstanding progress overall during their time in school.
- By the end of Year 6 standards attained in English and mathematics are consistently higher than national levels.
- The proportion of pupils making expected and better than the expected rate of progress compares very well with national figures.
- Teaching is outstanding. Regular checking of pupils' progress makes sure that teachers are able to make sure pupils' learning and progress is at its best.
- Teachers provide excellent advice during lessons to help pupils to improve their learning. However, this is not always the case with some of their written comments.
- Pupils' have an extremely positive attitude toward learning because staff make sure that lessons challenge pupils at the correct level and are fun.
- Pupils feel safe in school because they know that they are very well cared for.
- During the inspection pupils' behaviour in and around the school was exemplary and school records show that this is typical.
- Pupils enthusiastically contribute to the school community through their school council. They regularly support those less fortunate by whole-heartedly committing to fundraising activities.
- The curriculum meets the needs of pupils extremely well. There is an outstanding programme for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, pupils are highly considerate and respectful towards adults and each other.
- Regular and accurate checking of the quality of teaching and pupils' progress has resulted in improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The headteacher is absolutely dedicated to, and highly successful in, driving forward school improvement. She is very well supported by her leadership team and a highly informed and committed governing body.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons and listened to pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, a local authority representative and school staff.
- The inspectors took account of 28 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and the summary information from a parental questionnaire distributed by the school. They also considered 21 staff questionnaires.
- A range of documents were looked at, including the school's analysis of how well it is doing, the school development plan and impact statement, pupil progress information, checks on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. The inspectors also examined work in pupils' books.

## Inspection team

Louise Murphy, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
John Ellwood	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from services families and those children that are looked after) is well below average.
- The majority of pupils are from a White British heritage and speak English as their first language, though there are a number of minority ethnic backgrounds represented at the school.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure the highest possible outcomes for pupils by sharing the good practice seen in some marking, so that pupils consistently know how to improve their work and are always given the opportunity to respond to teachers' comments.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children start school in the Reception class with skills and knowledge that are slightly above or typical of those expected for their age. They make good and sometimes outstanding progress because teaching is very well planned and a range of exciting activities that keep children engaged and motivated are provided.
- Reception class prepares pupils extremely well to move on to Year 1. Progress continues briskly across Key Stage 1 and 2 and pupils continue to achieve exceptionally well. They leave at the end of Year 6 with standards in English and mathematics that are very regularly significantly above the national average. Impressive numbers of pupils make better than expected progress in both English and mathematics.
- Pupils who read to inspectors were extremely enthusiastic about books. Younger pupils demonstrated a good use of letters and sounds to read new words and older pupils kept the listener interested by varying their voice to suit the character and the situation. In 2012 pupils performed exceptionally well in the national Year 1 reading check, and at the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils read at the expected level and half attained much better than this.
- Pupils currently in school are achieving exceedingly well and regularly use their literacy, numeracy and computer skills across all subjects. They are keen to learn and approach their work with great enthusiasm, taking pride in completing and presenting it to the very best of their ability.
- The attainment of those eligible for pupil premium funding, including those known to be eligible for free school meals is well above similar pupils nationally in English and in mathematics. They were half a year behind other pupils at school in English and almost one term ahead in mathematics. The pupils' premium funding is being used to effectively narrow the gaps between groups of pupils eligible for the funding and those who are not. This demonstrates the commitment of school leaders to provide equal opportunities.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and pupils from all ethnic heritages make the same excellent progress. This is because teachers work closely with teaching assistants to make sure that learning activities meet the needs of individual pupils.

### The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Teaching is now outstanding because of the headteacher's relentless drive to raise standards. Moreover, staff discuss learning and share ideas to help each other develop increasingly effective practice.
- Teachers have high expectations of all pupils and constantly check on learning. They use the school's comprehensive progress tracking information to plan lessons that precisely meet individual's needs. In addition, they carefully question to assess pupils' understanding and if necessary adjust their teaching to make sure that every pupil can achieve their best. Pupils respond well to their teachers' excellent advice during lessons. However, some teachers do not provide the same good guidance in their written comments and pupils do not always have the opportunity to respond to remarks.
- The work seen in pupils' books is exceptionally well presented and demonstrates that teaching and learning is typically outstanding.
- Pupils take part in a wide range of stimulating activities that capture their imaginations and challenge them to think deeply. In the Reception class the children were engaging in activities based on an exciting story about Hansel and Gretel. One child independently wrote, 'The witch had a long nose, a walking stick and googly eyes.' Some children used words stuck on to bricks to actively build their sentences, while others took on roles of characters in the story. All children were completely engrossed in their tasks whether working independently or under the guidance of an adult.

- Lessons inspire pupils to find things out for themselves. For example, in Year 2 pupils were using a range of source materials including the internet to research facts about elephants. Pupils were able to eloquently explain facts such as, 'The lead elephant is the matriarch,' and 'Elephants are from the pachyderm family.' They were also confident in judging their own learning and that of others.
- All subjects are taught extremely well. Whenever possible mathematics topics conclude with pupils solving problems that demonstrate how well they can apply their basic skills. Pupils are also exceptionally confident in using a range of skills when reading unfamiliar texts and can discuss the books they are reading with a depth of understanding.
- Teachers and teaching assistants, including those who support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding and pupils from minority ethnic groups, support and encourage pupils to do their best. Excellent relationships between all adults and pupils are a strong feature of the school.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- As soon as they start school children learn to value each other, the adults around them and their caring school community. Pupils are polite, courteous and show respect for adults and each other. They are extremely keen to learn and their excellent behaviour contributes very well to the outstanding progress that they make. One pupil commented, 'We are all really well behaved and it gives you a good feeling.'
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and their parents unanimously agree that they are well cared for. Pupils are determined that bullying is not an issue at St. Gabriel's although they do learn about it and can explain different types of bullying such as physical and emotional bullying.
- The school council are proud that they are able to plan fund raising events and donate the proceeds to local and international charities. For example on 'Flush Friday' pupils bring in 20 pence to contribute toward providing toilet facilities in Uganda.
- Pupils also appreciate spending time in the garden area and work hard to grow vegetables; they then produce salad bags which are sold to raise money to buy more seeds. At the end of the summer a curry is cooked and served at lunchtime, using vegetables from the garden, to help encourage healthy eating.
- Older pupils are extremely mindful of their younger friends and set a very good example in all that they say and do. For example, Year 6 pupils help younger children in the dining hall; they also pair up to feed the school's pet rabbits.
- Attendance is above average and this reflects how much pupils enjoy school. The overwhelming message is that, 'Everyone is welcome here.'

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The headteacher has created a highly cohesive team who share her vision and extremely high ambition for the school community. The whole staff is determined that all pupils will benefit fully from their education.
- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection as a result of a robust schedule of lesson observations and an effective programme of staff training. Teachers' individual performance is managed extremely well. Targets reflect the high aspirations the school has for pupils' progress and are clearly linked to school priorities. It is evident that school leaders, including governors, are acutely aware of the quality of teaching in the school and make sure that teachers' progression through the pay scales is linked to how effective they are.
- The outstanding improvements of recent years are underpinned by how robustly leaders understand the school's strengths, how perceptively they plan for future development, how carefully they check on the impact of their actions and how vigilantly they track the performance

of individual and groups of pupils. The school's leadership has demonstrated that it is capable of continuing to make improvements.

- The curriculum is outstanding and meets the needs of pupils very well. Exceptional provision for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development runs through everything the school does. There are opportunities in assemblies and in lessons to share thoughts and reflect on values. Trips and additional activities such as musical instrument tuition and singing to public audiences broaden pupils' cultural horizons. The eco-garden allows all pupils, including those who sometimes find the classroom experience challenging, an alternative learning venue and experience.
- The local authority has a clear view of the school's strengths and provides a light touch support as and when requested.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body brings an additional expertise to the school, they regularly attend training to keep themselves up-to-date and develop new skills. Governors know the school very well and are highly committed to driving improvements in teaching, for example, through the effective use of performance management. They also make sure that the school fulfils statutory duties including safeguarding requirements. The governing body understands how to check on pupil progress and carefully assess the impact of new systems on improving standards. Governors have agreed the use of pupil premium grant to fund additional staff and enrichment activities to make sure that all pupils make outstanding progress.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	119501
<b>Local authority</b>	Blackburn with Darwen
<b>Inspection number</b>	403393

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	210
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Norman Reeve
<b>Headteacher</b>	Belinda Haigh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 October 2007
<b>Telephone number</b>	01254 249462
<b>Fax number</b>	Not applicable
<b>Email address</b>	st.gabriels@blackburn.gov.uk



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